

Office of Environmental Justice



Environmental Justice Fact Sheet

Community/University Partnership (CUP) Grants Program - 1995-98

OVERVIEW. The EPA established this special Grant Program for Community/University Partnerships (CUP) to help community groups efficiently address local environmental justice issues through active partnerships with institutions of higher education. Under this program EPA will emphasize meaningful, fully interactive two-way cooperation between communities and institutions of higher education to address environmental justice issues (e.g., waste sites that are polluting water bodies, or pesticide contamination of farm workers), identify pollution sources, train residents on their rights and responsibilities, and help resolve environmental problems.

Partnerships **must** be established with **formal agreements** (i.e. Memorandum of Understanding signed by both the university and the community) between a university or college and at least one socio-economically disadvantaged community, which is adversely impacted by an environmental hazard. Through these partnerships, communities will be encouraged to become involved in accessing information from environmental databases, in cleaning up and restoring communities that have environmental insults and in surveying and monitoring environmental quality. These initiatives increase environmental awareness, expand community outreach, and provide training and education to resolve environmental problems such as exposure to environmental pollutants in socio-economically disadvantaged communities.

ELIGIBILITY. Participation is limited to institutions of higher education which have formal partnerships with one or more community group. Applications will serve as the sole source for evaluation. A panel of knowledgeable representatives reviews and evaluates each application.

1998. There is no CUP Program this fiscal year.

A program evaluation and availability of funds will determine whether or not there will be a 1999 Program. Please Call 1-800-962-6215.

1995 COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY GRANTS

AWARDED This was the first year for the CUP grants. Out of the 54 applications received, 7 awards of \$300,000 each were made. Each grant is listed below

Cornell University - Ithaca, NY

Environmental Justice on Iroquois Reservations: Dialogue and Problem-Solving - \$298,654

Cornell University and the State University of New York College (SUNY) have formed a consortium to improve environmental justice outreach to five Iroquois nations: Onondaga, Akwesasne, Tuscarora, Tonawanda and Seneca. This consortium proposes a results-oriented dialogue with the Iroquois communities that will facilitate assessment and understanding of environmental concerns on Iroquois reservations while attracting Iroquois students to consider careers in environmental sciences.

The project will consist of a series of workshops, lectures and two search conferences. There will also be ten environmental justice summer internships, two in each of the five Iroquois reservation communities, to be filled by undergraduate students with an interest in addressing the reservation's environmental problems.

HOSTOS Community College - Bronx, NY - \$299,939

HOSTOS-Bronx Environmental Justice Project

The primary goal of this project is to build community-based capacity to better understand environmental threats which face the residents of Bronx County, New York. The project will develop a comprehensive picture of environmental conditions using the geographic information system (GIS); a "train-the-trainer" program will be developed and delivered to 25 individuals representing

at least 10 community-based organizations in the Bronx; and, a Community-Right-to-Know training program. To ensure that the program meets the needs of the community, an Advisory Board will be utilized in the project design and operations.

**University of California - Berkeley
Environmental Justice Community/University
Partnership Project - \$300,000**

The purpose of this project is to create models for collaboration between affected communities and University academic staff to address environmental health concerns in those communities. The Partnership includes, The University of California at Berkeley, Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), Asian Immigrants Women's Advocates (AIWA), South West Organizing Project (SWOP), South West Public Workers Union (SWPWU), and People Organized for Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER).

This project will work with community members to enable them to become aware, skilled, and effective environmental and workplace health trainers. The project will also develop culturally relevant curricula based on the results of a series of workshops conducted with social/health services providers and community organizations.

**University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
A Tribal Community/University Environmental Justice
Partnership in Wisconsin - \$300,000**

The Stevens Point campus has had a long-standing and positive relationship with eleven Indian Tribes of Wisconsin, involving both outreach and education initiatives. This project will assist tribes in the strengthening of their infrastructure to manage environmental problems on tribal lands. This effort will be accomplished by providing information to Tribes on environmental issues, assisting in training and technical assistance and providing mechanisms for inter-governmental cooperatives. The project will create a sustainable development model and host an Inter-tribal environmental justice forum to address the unique problems of the different tribes and produce education materials.

**Tennessee Technological University - Cookeville
Chattanooga Creek Watershed Community/University
Partnership - \$300,000**

Tennessee Technological University, Chattanooga State Technical Community College, and two community-based organizations in the Chattanooga Creek area have formed a partnership for the purpose of addressing environmental justice issues in the Alton Park/Piney Woods communities. The project's goals are to involve community residents in the development of local solutions to local environmental problems. The project will include an educational component that addresses the

environmental quality of Chattanooga Creek; a comprehensive assessment of community risks; and the development of a strategy to improve communication among agencies, industries, and community groups that share a common concern for the future of this area.

**Northern New Mexico Community College - Espanola
Northern New Mexico Community College and Taos
Pueblo Partnering for the Future - \$267,435**

The Community College will work directly with the tribal government of Taos Pueblo to meet self-identified needs in the development of baseline data, long-range planning for an integrated environmental program, and training of Taos Pueblo communities. This program will also enhance the technical capability of the Pueblo to conduct environmental monitoring of hazardous materials on the reservations.

The college will also share this program model, training, and data with environmental staff of other Pueblos; and, where feasible, with the New Mexico Environmental Department to enhance its effort to develop a state-wide data base. This information will be presented at public forums, tribal environmental conferences, and governmental meetings. Northern New Mexico Community College will work with Taos Pueblo to develop proficiency in the use of public access to information through innovative electronic media.

**Xavier University of Louisiana - New Orleans
Environmental Justice Partnership Project
Community Along The River - \$300,000**

The purpose of this project is to assist community groups along the Mississippi River to efficiently address environmental justice issues through an active partnership with the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) at Xavier University of Louisiana. Specifically, the project will address the environmental research, education, and outreach needs of the DSCEJ Mississippi River Corridor Community Partners.

The center will work with nine communities represented by a Community Advisory Board (CAB) that spans seven of the nine parishes along the chemical corridor. Specifically, the project will conduct research to investigate the impact of environmental hazards, establish community-based communication programs and develop environmental justice education materials for teachers and elementary and secondary students.

**1996 COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY GRANTS
AWARDED**

In 1996, 9 awards were made out of the 102 applications received. A brief description of each award follows.

University of Washington - Asian and Pacific Islander Seafood Consumption Study - \$205,316

The purpose of this project is to improve the health and environmental quality of Asian Pacific Islanders in the Seattle/Puget Sound area by empowering the local community with information they can use to develop their own awareness and agenda to address environmental problems. The specific aims of the project are to document seafood consumption by surveying communities using culturally sensitive outreach tools, to work with community leaders to develop outreach models, to develop culturally appropriate and effective risk communication materials, and to document the consumption rates and patterns in these communities.

Haskell Indian Nations University -Community/ University Partnership for Native American Science Education and Technical Support - \$220,320

The purpose is to address water quality concerns of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribe and Kickapoo Tribe. The goals are to assess the sources and extent of water contamination, seek compliance with existing water quality standards, and create a remediation plan to resolve the water quality problems. Practical hands-on workshops on the various water quality problems will be provided for members of affected Indian communities. In addition, efforts will be made to bring together both Indian and non-Indian landowners to build consensus on a water contamination remediation plan.

University of Texas at El Paso - The UTEP/UT at Houston School of Public Health in El Paso Community Partnership Program for EJ...\$250,000

This project is a collaborative effort involving Adults and Youth United Development (AYUD), a community-based organization serving residents of the Colonias, and two universities located on the U.S.-Mexico border. The project is to create an environment where local community groups can have the same input as any other constituency into the processes of developing environmental policies and enforcing environmental regulations. This goal will be achieved through enhancing the community's understanding of data and environmental risks, training community members in accessing information systems and conducting workshops between government personnel and community representatives. Issues to be addressed include safe potable water, wastewater treatment and health related problems.

North Carolina Central University - Partnership Effort for the Advancement of Children's Health - \$249,404

The purpose is to reduce lead exposure in houses located in the North/East Central Durham area. The Partnership Effort for the Advancement of Children's Health (PEACH), a coalition with representatives from the community and the health education, environmental science and medical professions, will provide leadership for this project. The goals are to identify and improve the condition of houses where lead poisoning problems are

most acute, use effective dialogue to mediate contacts between community, environmental agencies, and state and local programs involved in the reduction of lead poisoning, and generate a plan for collection, interpretation, and presentation of the data from this project to all stakeholders, including the State of North Carolina.

HOSTOS Community College - Community Access Geographic Information System (GIS) for EJ Initiatives in the South Bronx - \$77,977

The purpose of this project is to develop a community-access geographic information system (GIS) for environmental justice initiatives in the South Bronx area. The partners will develop a state of the art GIS laboratory and conduct an environmental assessment of baseline conditions in the Bronx. To ensure appropriate access to this GIS, the partners will seek to establish GIS capability in the Bronx community district offices, public libraries, and pilot some systems in a few high schools. Training will be provided to residents on a regular basis.

Arizona State University - EJ Partnership Project: Reservation Environmental Assessment Project-\$249,999

This project seeks to utilize the Reservation Environmental Assessment Project (REAP), a program designed to instruct and educate Indian community representatives about specific problems affecting their communities through both classroom and hands-on techniques. The education will focus on lead in paint, drinking water, soils, and incidental pesticides in soils, surface water and foods. The Camp Verde and Colorado River reservations will receive on-site environmental assessments and will be assisted in the development of remediation strategies.

Columbia University of City of New York - The Northern Manhattan Environmental Justice Partnership to Develop Environmental Health Leadership-\$244,920

The purpose of this project is to inform and empower residents in three urban communities (Central & West Harlem and Washington Heights) about the excessive levels of airborne particulate matter and carbon monoxide from heavy car, bus, and truck traffic as well as other environmental pollutants. The goals are to facilitate communication between community residents and environmental health researchers, provide environmental health leadership training for residents, utilize GIS as an education tool, and intervene and reduce exposure to environmental toxins.

Xavier University of Louisiana A Community Lead Education Project - \$250,000

Xavier University is in partnership with ten parishes along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans to address lead exposure. The goals of the project are to conduct studies on the toxicology and epidemiology of environmental hazards related to lead

and on the socioeconomic impact of lead exposures, develop community-based education/communication programs capable of responding to the specific needs of lead impacted communities, and develop environmental education curricula that emphasize lead poisoning prevention in teacher training and classroom materials.

University of Missouri-St. Louis. St. Louis Metropolitan EJ Empowerment Project - \$248,098

The purpose of this project is to address the environmental justice problems in the St. Louis area through the development of strategies focusing on local community involvement and empowerment. The goals of the project are to improve communication and coordination through the establishment of an Environmental Justice Advisory Board, provide expert consultants to advise residents, enhance opportunities for scientific analysis through participation in round tables with universities, develop plans for community work in each neighborhood, and compile and disseminate environmental justice information to affected communities. Each neighborhood team will focus on strategies for environmental improvement, clean-ups and reuse of local properties.

1997 COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY GRANTS PROGRAM

98 applications were received, 11 grants were awarded.

Florida A&M University - Southeastern Center for Community Environmental Health - \$ 250,000

This project will partner Florida A&M University Institute for Public Health, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Florida A&M University Environmental Sciences Institute, and community organizations to improve health services delivered to specific communities affected by health problems related to environmental conditions. The project will accomplish this goal by developing a model for assessing health and needs for health services in four environmentally overburdened communities in the states of Florida and Georgia. An analysis of the assessment model will result in recommendations for appropriate and sound community-based prevention and intervention measures.

This project will develop profiles of the current health status of each community and a listing of health services available to affected communities and their health-care providers. Environmental education of health care providers will be an integral part of this project. Through this training, providers will be informed about environmental exposures and participate in developing educational intervention strategies.

Indiana University Northwest Campus -

Environmental Justice Partnership-\$ 246,486

Indiana University Northwest (IUN), in partnership with the Grand Calumet Task Force, proposes to create the Northwest Indiana Environmental Justice Task Force and Environmental Justice Resource Center to ensure the inclusion of the views of low-income and minority populations in environmental initiatives in northwest Indiana. The project will include an analysis of problems related to environmental justice, which will include exposures to toxic substances, related health problems, and corrective actions determined to be necessary. The Northwest Indiana Environmental Justice Resource Center will serve the northwest Indiana area, including the cities of East Chicago, Gary, and Hammond. The Center will serve as a primary information and training resource for environmental justice issues that affect northwest Indiana and will develop a public school curriculum for several grade levels on environmental justice issues. The partners also will sponsor three field projects including an "Environmental Summer" youth project, a site watcher program made up of residents trained to evaluate whether proper management of contaminated sites is taking place, and a river watcher program to monitor the Grand Calumet River.

New Mexico Highland University - Pecos River Watershed Plan-\$ 89,064

The residents of Pecos, New Mexico have requested the help of New Mexico Highlands University and its partners, the Pecos Watershed Association and the Tierra y Montes Soil and Water Conservation District, to help identify and solve social and environmental injustices in their community. Through a series of community interactions, surveys, and communication methods, the partners hope to create a plan for the Pecos Watershed. The objectives of this project are to hold informational gatherings, facilitate community involvement, promote social cooperation, and promote effective decision making.

The location of the Pecos Watershed makes it a popular retreat for the many recreational water users and rural home buyers of Pecos, New Mexico. The heavy recreational uses of the watershed combined with improper water disposal methods have degraded lands and contaminated the once-fertile soil and high-quality water. The project will assess the causes of unlawful disposal of liquid soil waste, identify extreme causes of riparian degradation in heavily used areas of the watershed, and implement a community outreach strategy to promote interaction between community members, natural resource professionals, and local government officials.

City College of San Francisco - Environmental Justice Community Education Project - \$ 249,720

The partnership among the City College of San Francisco, the Southeast Alliance for Environmental Justice, the San Francisco Police Department/District Attorney's Environmental Crimes Task Force, and the Urban Habitat Program of the Earth Island Institute will

educate, train, and network 100 stakeholders in San Francisco's predominantly low-income and African-American Bayview/Hunter's Point neighborhood. The partners will create a stakeholder network of individuals, businesses, and organizations committed to eliminating public health hazards and advocating economic development initiatives to enhance community-based efforts to protect the environment.

The partnership will establish an ongoing communications network and an Environmental Justice Resource Center to support the efforts of stakeholders to decrease the numerous environmental and public health problems that currently affect the neighborhood's quality of life and economic development. The partners will develop and conduct an eight-week leadership development program for 100 identified stakeholders. This program will provide participants with the skills necessary to use electronic communications technology to advocate removal of toxic substances, reduction in environmental crimes, pollution abatement, improvements in public health, and non-polluting economic development strategies. The resource center will disseminate information generated through the leadership program to the general public, which will include health surveys, maps and lists of known polluters, and summaries of environmental laws. Increased interaction between public- and private-sector stakeholders in the neighborhood will serve as an important tool in reducing all types of crime, including environmental crimes. In addition, an Internet Web site will be established to provide a continuing source of information about neighborhood concerns and activities.

Fort Belknap College - Developing and Enhancing Aquatic Resource Analysis Capabilities Through Collaboration-\$ 249,982

This proposal represents a collaboration of Fort Belknap College, the Fort Belknap Community Council, and Island Mountain Protectors to address environmental justice concerns related to water quality on the southern end of the Fort Belknap Reservation. The reservation, located in northern Montana, houses the Zortman-Landusky gold mine, the largest cyanide heap leach mine in Montana. This project will examine the causes, degree, and extent of water pollution from past and present mining activities, as well as the effects mining activities might have had on the groundwater that serves as a source of drinking water for the communities in the area.

The partners have identified four objectives to achieve the goal of addressing the community's concerns about environmental justice and contamination from mining activities. First, the partners will develop and enhance local capabilities in water quality monitoring by several methods which include hiring a hydro geologist on the faculty of Fort Belknap College, establishing a water quality laboratory, and training students and personnel in monitoring capabilities. Second, to improve coordination of monitoring efforts by local authorities and agencies, the partners will establish a water quality resource center to serve as a central clearinghouse for all local water quality data. Third, the partners will train the local community in

methods of water quality monitoring through establishment of a specialized program at Fort Belknap College and through local workshops for community residents. Fourth, the partners will use a number of methods, including informal forums, local media coverage in newspapers and on radio, and presentations at local schools, to raise community awareness of the environmental and human health effects of degradation of water quality. By providing training and education in these areas, the project will attempt to enhance the community's ability to respond to current environmental concerns with self-sufficiency, technical acumen, and cultural integrity.

Merrimack College - Community Learning for Environmental Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN)-\$ 250,000

The Community Learning for Environmental Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN) project is a partnership between the Merrimack College Urban Resource Institute (MCURI); community development organizations, such as the Lawrence/Methuen Enterprise Partnership (L/MEP) and the Lawrence/Methuen Community Coalition (L/MCC); and several local schools to provide outreach and educational programs to the community of Lawrence in an effort to reclaim neighborhoods and foster future generations of concerned, informed citizens. The project will create a demonstration reclamation project that will increase residents' environmental awareness and provide them with the skills necessary to use assessment and strategic planning tools to undertake other environmental reclamation projects.

The project will address the concerns of a small urban community through educational programs, such as Resources to Accelerate Integrated Science Education (RAISE) with the Lawrence School Department working with students from kindergarten through the undergraduate level. Through the Accept the Challenge program, bilingual students at Lawrence High School will also have the opportunity to earn scholarships to attend Merrimack College by acting as mentors for younger students and providing community service. Project CLEAN will develop a program aimed at preventing future environmental degradation in the community, minimizing the damage that already has been done, and taking into consideration social and economic revitalization.

North Carolina Central University - Reducing Pesticide Exposures in Farm Workers and Farm Worker Families-\$ 249,193

The partnership between North Carolina Central University (NCCU) and Tri-County Community Health Center (TCCHC) will develop a model intervention program to teach farm workers and their families to reduce the risk of pesticide exposure in their homes and in the agricultural fields. The project will involve affected populations in focus groups, surveys, and training sessions and will identify their practices and concerns related to pesticide exposure.

Four specific objectives have been identified for the project: 1) identify practices that increase the likelihood of

exposure to pesticides; 2) identify and document health concerns of farm workers, their families, and health-care and child-care providers considered to be related to pesticide exposure; 3) implement and evaluate an education intervention program that enhances the State-mandated pesticide education program; and 4) assist TCCHC in obtaining access to information about pesticides and other contaminants that affect residents of the counties they serve. A project advisory board will be formed to oversee and evaluate all phases of the project.

Virginia Commonwealth University - Environmental Justice Partnership-\$ 249,830

The partners in this project, the Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) of Virginia Commonwealth University and the William Byrd Community House, will work to inform community leaders and residents about the risks of living in an area where air quality is impaired, and both housing and soils are contaminated with lead. Community residents will also be informed about their opportunities to seek assistance to address their environmental concerns.

The activities of the partners will be guided by an environmental justice advisory panel, consisting of the partners and representatives of the local community organizations. Activities will be coordinated through the neighborhood environmental monitoring program, made up of residents recruited by community organizations. Teams of residents will be formed to monitor the effect of lead and impaired air quality on their respective neighborhoods and develop ways to minimize these effects. Graduate students will conduct air and soil monitoring to build a baseline profile that will be combined with an epidemiological analysis to identify respiratory illnesses and those related to exposure to lead. The data gathered about the various effects of lead and reduced air quality will be distributed to community members and city leaders to support development of strategies to address the issues and promote change at the local and state levels.

Northwest Indian College - River Witness Environmental Justice Project - \$ 245,688

The Northwest Indian College and the Lummi Nation propose a partnership to address the current void in reliable predictions of fecal coliform contamination that affects Lummi shellfish resources. Because the Lummi community harvests shellfish for personal and noncommercial use, serious health effects may be resulting due to the lack of data and information. The project will gather, analyze, and disseminate data on fecal coliform bacteria, develop community awareness of issues and responsibilities related to that concern, and develop a partnership with state and federal agencies to address the immediate problems related to the issue.

To ensure that the Lummi Nation will have adequate information to support decisions about when shellfish should or should not be harvested, the partners will conduct several studies to evaluate the residence time and transport of fecal coliform bacteria in the affected waters. The data and information compiled from the

studies will be made available to the community through a conference on watershed and food resources; other publicity, such as articles and media events; and a video about the study. The partners also will form a partnership with such agencies as the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Health, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. The relationship will facilitate improved communications about reclassification of shellfish beds from restricted to conditional status, as well as the sharing of pertinent information with those harvesting similarly affected areas. To extend the limited resources available for dealing with the issue, the partners will develop a plan for future cooperation and share it with other interested parties.

University of Minnesota - A Partnership to Evaluate a Superfund Site on Leech Lake Tribal Lands-\$ 249,781

The University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program and the Leech Lake Tribal Council will partner to study the effects of contamination on surface and groundwater from the St. Regis Paper Company Superfund site, a former wood treatment facility that is located near the Leech Lake Band of the Chippewa Tribe. This project will address the community's frustration arising from the lack of monitoring and information about remediation of the site by assessing historical data and groundwater models, developing a long-term monitoring program methodology for screening contaminants, evaluating health risks at the site, and communicating those risks to the public.

A groundwater extraction/containment system has been in place at the site owned by Champion International Paper Company since 1985, but there is recent evidence that a remnant plume has moved off site, potentially affecting surface-water and groundwater resources on Leech Lake Chippewa tribal lands. The project will establish a panel of experts to use groundwater modeling to evaluate information about groundwater contamination and assess exposure pathways. Through this project, an ecological risk assessment panel and a tribal human health risk assessment panel will be established to determine potential health impacts of surface and groundwater contamination. Tribal educators and Sea Grant outreach and communications staff will establish risk communication tools to improve public awareness of environmental and human health risks by developing a workshop for tribal communities.

Albert Einstein College/Montefiore Medical Center - Community-Based Efforts to Reduce Lead Hazards - \$ 249,720

The Montefiore Medical Center, the teaching hospital of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, will partner with the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, a community group, to develop a self-sustaining, community-based and community-run outreach program focused on the elimination of lead poisoning in high-risk neighborhoods in New York City. The project will show that the community can resolve such environmental issues as lead poisoning, if the community has the knowledge and tools necessary to change environmental conditions.

Under this program, volunteers from communities in New York City will help improve outreach efforts and abatement of lead-based paint to help prevent childhood lead poisoning. The partnership will develop programs to improve community members' knowledge of the problems associated with lead-based paint, ultimately bringing about improved lead screening and reporting of violations of the lead paint housing code. Trained local volunteers will form a Lead Busters Team to disseminate information and help establish abatement efforts.

A list of the Environmental Justice Coordinators follows on page 8. If you have specific environmental justice questions, feel free to call the appropriate office or region. For general questions about environmental justice and about the CUP Program, call 1-800-962-6215.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
1-800-962-6215**

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1/28/98

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